

# Mexican American Religions



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This collection presents a rich, multidisciplinary inquiry into the role of religion in the U.S. Mexican American community. Breaking new ground by analyzing the critical influence of religion on Mexican American literature, art, politics, and pop culture, the volume makes the case for the establishment of Mexican American religious studies as a distinct, recognized field of scholarly inquiry. The contributors include scholars of religion and Latin American and Chicano/a studies as well as of sociology, anthropology, and literary and performance studies. They delve into subjects including the origins of Mexican American religious studies, the scholar Mario Barrera's theory of internal colonialism theory, and Cesar Chavez's faith-based activism. Contributors consider the Arizona-based utopian community Valle de Paz (Valley of Peace) founded by the preacher and activist Reies Lopez Tijerina's in the 1950s, as well as the late 1960s activism of Catolicos Por La Raza in Los Angeles. Other contributors consider how popular religious symbols and traditions such as Our Lady of Guadalupe, home altars, and Los Pastores dramas (nativity plays) function as vehicles for personal, social, and political empowerment. Still others explore how Chicana writers including Gloria Anzaldua, Mary Helen Ponce, Denise Chavez, and Sandra Cisneros, invoke religious symbols, rhetoric, and values to challenge the melting-pot metaphor of integration and create a new moral vision highlighting social injustice. Contributors examine the role that healing plays in Protestantism and popular Catholicism, looking specifically at the Latino Pentecostal movement and the practice of the curanderismo healing tradition in East Los Angeles. Turning to popular culture, they discuss Luis Valdez's 1991 video drama *La Pastorela*: "The Shepherds' Tale," the spirituality of Chicana art, and the religious overtones of the reverence for the slain Tejano music star Selena.

作者介绍:

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